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THE ANNUAL REPORT  
for the Year 1949 of  
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
to the Depwade Rural District Council.

High Common,  
Wymondham.

September, 1950.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year, 1949. The Report is made according to the instructions of the Ministry of Health. The vital statistics of the district are given below, together with appropriate comments.

The Registrar-General estimates the population of your district at the 31st. December, 1949, to be 17,900. This shows an increase of population of 190 during the year 1949. The natural increase by births over deaths during the year was 48 so that the movement of people into the district from outside its boundaries, though not so marked as in 1948, still continues.

The live birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population during the year was 16.76 which is .63 per 1,000 less than the figure for 1948 but is almost the same as the average figure for England and Wales in 1949. The birth rate for the district remains higher than the death rate there being 48 more births than deaths in your district.

The still birth rate per 1,000 total births was 13.20 which shows a reduction on the previous year and is not unduly high.

The death rate in your district during the year was 14.08 per 1,000 of the population which shows an increase of 1.83 per 1,000 over the figures for 1948. The death rate for England and Wales for 1949 was 11.7 per 1,000. 68% of the total deaths were due to diseases specifically associated with old age and for 1948 this figure was 55%. The number of deaths from cancer was 29 in the year under review, 12 less than for the previous year.

The mortality rate in infants under one year was 31.46 per 1,000 live births. There were no deaths of illegitimate children under one year. These figures compare very favourably with the National average.

There were no deaths of mothers as a result of childbirth during 1949 so that the district's good record in this respect, I am glad to say, continues. Two babies died as the result of premature birth.

Seven persons died as a result of pulmonary tuberculosis in 1949 compared with 3 in 1948. Ten new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and 9 new cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis were added to the Register of cases in your district during the year under review. The number of cases left on the Register after making allowance for deaths and recoveries was 112 at the end of the year. This is an increase of 4 cases over the previous year. The 112 cases are made up as follows; 61 pulmonary and 51 non-pulmonary tuberculosis cases. The increased number on the Register consist of 4 pulmonary cases. The gradual rise in the incidence of tuberculosis in the district is therefore maintained and is no doubt a reflection of the housing problem in the district.

There was no serious outbreak of any infectious disease during the year. Measles and whooping cough continued to provide a greater number of infectious cases notified and occurred sporadically in small numbers throughout the district during the year. There were 3 cases of acute anterior poliomyelitis, 1 in the first quarter of the year and 2 in the last - a low incidence. There was a low incidence of scarlet fever and this disease seems to have been well controlled by the system of case finding and the exclusion of carriers from schools.

The area of your district is 79,742 acres.  
The population (Registrar-General's Estimate) at the end  
of 1949 was 17,900.

Number of inhabited houses, 1931 Census - 5,087.

Year 1949 - 5,700.

Rateable Value £49652. Product of Penny Rate £212 approx.

### Vital Statistics for 1949.

#### Births and Deaths.

<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.	149	137	286
Illegitimate.	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
	<u>154</u>	<u>146</u>	<u>300</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Estimated Population - 16.76.

#### Still Births.

Legitimate	3	1	4
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total births - 13.20.

#### Deaths

The total deaths for the year were 252, which gives a Death Rate  
per 1,000 of 14.08.

#### Deaths of Infants under one year.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate	6	3	9
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>

Deaths of infants under one year per 1,000 live births:-

Legitimate - 31.46.

Illegitimate - Nil.

The following table gives a comparison of the Live Birth Rate of  
Depwade Rural District and England and Wales for the past five years:-

<u>Year.</u>	<u>Birth Rate /1000 Depwade.</u>	<u>Birth Rate /1000 Eng. &amp; Wales.</u>
1945.	17.02.	16.1.
1946.	19.62.	19.1.
1947.	19.11.	21.
1948.	17.39.	17.9.
1949.	16.76.	16.7.

The following table gives the causes of deaths in 1949:-

<u>Cause of Death.</u>	<u>Total (all ages).</u>
Pulmonary tuberculosis	7.
Syphilitic Diseases	1.
Influenza	2.
Cancer (all sites)	29.
Diabetes	1.
Cerebral Haemorrhage	35.
Heart Diseases	96.
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System.	10.
Bronchitis.	<u>12.</u>



Cause of Death.Total (all ages).

	B/Forward	193.
Pneumonia		12.
Diarrhoea, infants under 2 years.		1.
Miscellaneous Digestive Diseases.		4.
Nephritis		6.
Premature Births.		2.
Congenital Malformations and Birth Injuries.		3.
Suicide		6.
Road Traffic Accidents.		3.
Other Violent Causes.		4.
All other Causes.		18.
		<u>252.</u>

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.WATER SUPPLIES.

During the year 117 water samples were taken with results as indicated in the following table:-

	<u>No. Taken.</u>	<u>No. Fit.</u>	<u>No. Unfit.</u>	<u>No. Doubtful.</u>
MAIN WATER.				
ROUTINE SAMPLES.				
For bacteriological examination.	27	24	1(a)	2(a)
For chemical analysis	3	3	-	-
MAIN WATER.				
SAMPLES FROM NEW MAINS.				
For bacteriological examination.	22	11	7(b)	4(b)
WELLS, BORES AND OTHER SOURCES.				
For bacteriological examination	50	17	29	4
For chemical analysis.	15	15	-	-
TOTALS:	117	70	37	10

NOTES:

(a) These samples were taken at Dickleburgh (2) and Thorpe Abbotts Aerodrome Site and following action by the Water and Sewerage Engineer were found to be satisfactory on re-sampling.

(b) In all cases where new mains or extensions are laid, samples are taken and followed up until the water is reported to be bacteriologically fit for use.

There continues to be a drop in the water levels of the shallow wells throughout the District, and carting of water had to be resorted to in 27 parishes out of the 35 in the District.

Again, I would like to emphasize the potential danger to health of water derived from shallow wells. Only after careful consideration of the site and surroundings should new wells of this type be permitted and the provisions of the Building Bye-Laws regarding their construction must be rigidly enforced. It is hoped that by the carrying out of the Council's main water scheme the use of such wells will be reduced considerably in the next few years.

Piped Water Supplies.

The following new mains and extensions were carried out:-

Bressingham	5,682 yards.	Scole	128 yards.
Denton	10,553 "	Long Stratton	2,191 "
		Rushall.	590 "
Total 10. 8 miles.			

The number of dwellings and approximate population being supplied from piped water is as follows:-

<u>Parish.</u>	<u>Number of Houses.</u>		<u>Total Houses.</u>	<u>Estimated Population.</u>
	<u>Direct to Houses.</u>	<u>By Standpipe.</u>		
Bressingham	113	36	149	520
Bunwell	24	-	24	80
Denton	55	37	92	320
Dickleburgh	87	8	95	330
Forncott	14	-	14	50
Hempnall	69	20	89	310
Long Stratton	158	39	197	690
Morningthorpe	30	10	40	140
Pulham Market	21	-	21	70
Harleston	371	74	445	1560
Roydon	41	16	57	200
Scole	156	-	156	550
Tibenham Ex. RAF Site.	15	-	15	50
Thorpe Abbots ditto.	40	-	40	140
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>1434</b>	<b>5010</b>

Approximately 28.3 per cent of the population of the District are now being supplied from piped water supplies, as compared with 21.8 per cent at the end of 1948.

#### DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

The main work of this description carried out in 1949 was the laying of 461 yards of 6" sewer in Gt. Moulton and Aslacton connected to the Sewage Works at Tibenham taken over from the Air Ministry, and by the end of the year 16 Council Houses at Woodrow Lane, Aslacton had been connected thereto.

At the Fritton Housing Site (8 houses) a small scheme (comprising septic tank, automatic pump, filter and humus tank) was installed, and at Roydon a scheme designed for 36, Houses was completed in December,

Some further progress has been made in the conversion of earth closets and middens to the water carriage system where sewers are available without resorting to Statutory action and in several other instances owners of property have put in modern drainage systems with approved septic tanks for indoor sanitation.

#### REFUSE & NIGHT-SOIL COLLECTION.

In September, 1949, the Council's direct labour refuse collection scheme was extended to operate in every parish in the District, when a second Dennis 10 cub-yard Vehicle was brought into service, and 4 extra men engaged, bringing the total to 9.

A fortnightly collection is made in all parishes (except Harleston which is weekly) and the service by the end of the year covered 4360 Houses (approximately 77% of all houses in the district) with a result that 725 loads of refuse were collected.

Refuse continues to be disposed of by semi-controlled tipping at 5 tips throughout the area, which can be regarded as satisfactory.

Night-Soil collection is still confined to the parish of Harleston where a weekly service is given. Arrangements for disposal of night-soil continues as in 1948.

The collection of salvaged waste paper from houses and shops was continued throughout the year, but as the demand from the mills completely disappeared by the end of April, only a relatively small amount (6 tons 8 cwts) was sold for £42. 5.0. In addition, 23 doz. salvaged bottles were sold for £1. 17. 0d.



## HOUSING.

During the year Demolition Orders were made in respect of 13 dwellings and an undertaking that the cottage would not be used for human habitation has been accepted in one other case. When complaints have been received regarding disrepair of houses, informal action has been taken to get essential work carried out and owners have, in the main, been co-operative and had the work done. In one case, however, an owner did not respond regarding essential repairs at 2 cottages, and notices were served under Section 93 of the Public Health Act, 1936. The notices were subsequently complied with following proceedings at a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

### Rural Housing Survey.

By the end of the year 2223 houses had been inspected and placed in various categories as follows:-

Category 1.	Fit in all respects -	436	19.5%
" 2.	Unfit, but requiring only minor repairs -	470	21.5%
" 3.	Unfit, but requiring major repairs -	833	37.5%
" 5.	Unfit, and incapable of being brought up to required housing standard -	484	21.5%

Note: Council houses have not been taken into account in the above figures.

During the year the Council have built a further 107 new houses making a total of 354 permanent post-war houses occupied by the end of 1949. In addition 86 post-war temporary dwellings have been provided by the conversion of service buildings. There are also 622 pre-war Council dwellings making a total of 1062 dwellings owned by the Council out of the total of 5700 in the District.

### FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

The number of factories on the register at December 31st, 1949, was as follows:-

Factories using mechanical power	71
Factories without mechanical power	18
	<u>89</u>

During the year 39 inspections were made and the following matters found to require attention:-

	<u>Found.</u>	<u>Abated.</u>
Premises requiring cleansing.	2	2
Insufficient Sanitary Accommodation	4	2x
Unsuitable or defective sanitary accommodation -	4	4
Factory Act Abstract not displayed.	3	2x

x The 3 outstanding contraventions have subsequently been remedied in 1950.

Inspections were also made at various building works sites in the District to ensure that satisfactory sanitary accommodation is provided for workmen. In only one case was this found to be inadequate and was remedied following informal action.

No notifications of outworkers were received in 1949 - the one previously notified having given up.

### GENERAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS.

The usual routine inspections of other premises controlled by the Public Health Act, and investigations into complaints of alleged nuisance from ditches, cesspools, etc., have been carried out, and in

no case has other than informal action been necessary to remedy any nuisance found.

Work under the Rats & Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, and Infestation Order 1943, has continued to be carried out, under delegation from the Norfolk County Council, and premises found to be infested have been referred to the Pests Officer of the Norfolk A.E.C., for treatment on behalf of the Council.

#### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

During the year a total of 15cwts. 1 qtr. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. of various foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption at food shops in the District. Brief details:-

Beef	944 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.	Tinned Meat	46 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Pork	328 lbs.	Miscellaneous Tinned	
Mutton (Imported)	25 lbs.	Foods	40 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Offal	58 lbs.	Miscellaneous Other	
Bacon	30 lbs.	Foods	241 lbs.

#### MILK SUPPLIES.

Important changes in the control of milk production took place on October 1st. 1949, when the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries took over the registration and control of all milk producers (including producer retailers) and the control and licensing of designated milk production. On that date all the milk producers in the District came under the jurisdiction of the Norfolk A.E.C., acting for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Council still being responsible for persons and premises concerned solely in the distribution of milk and drainage and water supplies at milk producing farms.

During the year 144 visits were made to cowsheds and dairies, mainly in connection with improvements being projected to bring the premises up to Accredited or T.T. standard.

One retailer in the district was issued with a licence to bottle and retail T.T. milk and 2 licences were granted for the distribution of Pasteurised Milk.

#### MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF ICE-CREAM.

No of premises registered -

(a) For manufacture and sale of ice-cream.	1.
(b) For sale only.	8.

Each of these 8 registered vendors sell ice-cream prepacked in cartons etc., as received from producers outside this District. 19 inspections of these premises were made during the year and no case of contravention of the Food & Drugs Act or Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations was found.

12 Samples of ice-cream were taken and submitted to bacteriological examination, results of which were received as follows:-

Grade I	-	Nil.	Grade III	-	3.
" II	-	3.	" IV	-	6.

It should be noted that the Methylene Blue Test for the bacteriological examination of ice-cream is not regarded as entirely satisfactory, and no statutory standard as to cleanliness or quality of ice-cream has yet been laid down.

#### GENERAL FOOD PREMISES.

Routine inspections continue to be made of butcher's shops, other food shops, and all other premises where food is prepared for sale to the public, and in general conditions have been found to be satisfactory.

In conclusion, may I express my thanks to the Council and it's staff for support and encouragement throughout the year.

W. W. SINCLAIR.

Medical Officer of Health Depwade R.D.C.